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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Transportation Commission

**From:** Victoria Kovacs, AICP, Transportation Planner – Public Works  
Doug McIntyre, AICP, Transportation Manager – Public Works

**Date:** December 13, 2023

**Subject:** NEIGHBORHOOD GREENWAYS - 128TH AVE NE MONITORING AND STORES TO SHORES PROJECT UPDATE

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission receive an update on the performance of the 128th Ave NE Greenway (North Rose Hill) and a project update on the current status of the next Neighborhood Greenway in design, Stores to Shores.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Neighborhood Greenways are a select network of low speed, low volume residential streets prioritized for walking and bicycling through the use of signage, pavement markings, and traffic calming and control measures. As such, driving an automobile on a greenway, by design, is less convenient than driving on the other streets. The purpose of a Neighborhood Greenway is to provide a facility for people of all ages and abilities to feel safe to walk and ride bicycles as a comfortable alternative to bike lanes on busy arterials.

The 2015 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) incorporates Neighborhood Greenways as part of the citywide bicycle network to connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, regional trails, and other destinations. The 2015 TMP includes Policy T-2.3: *Build a network of greenways* and two actions, T-2.3.1: *Develop standards for Greenways in Kirkland* and T-2.3.2: *Prioritize and construct greenway projects*.

Following this TMP policy, from 2017-2018 the City developed the Kirkland Neighborhood Greenways Guide for Implementation<sup>1</sup> in coordination with a citizen advisory group and the Transportation Commission. This document functions as a standards document for Greenways and includes a conceptual greenway network map with considerations for final routing through the design process, design details, prioritization of individual greenway projects, outreach schedule, and lastly performance measures to monitor the success of a greenway. These performance measures include:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/public-works/pdfs/kirkland-neighborhood-greenways-guide-for-implementation.pdf>

- 20 mph 85<sup>th</sup> percentile vehicle speeds
- 2,000 maximum average daily traffic
- 100% safe intersection crossings
- 1% increase in non-motorized use per year post construction.

Along with development of the guidelines document, in 2017 design was initiated for the first two Neighborhood Greenways in Kirkland, 128th Ave NE and NE 75th St (North and South Rose Hill). Design was complete at the start of 2020, construction activities were primarily from 2021-2022, and substantial completion reached with RRFB activation in March 2023.

Finally, the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) adopted in June 2022 also incorporates Neighborhood Greenways as a central component of the planned citywide bicycle network as they often provide a parallel, alternative route to a busier street where it would be difficult to implement a low-stress bikeway. The ATP has the stated Objective 2-1: *Complete a connected spine network of safe high comfort cycling facilities such as protected facilities, separated trails or pathways, neighborhood greenways supplemented by a denser network of additional bike lanes or other on-road bike facilities.*

### **128TH AVE NE GREENWAY MONITORING**

The most significant traffic management device installed on the North Rose Hill Greenway is a median diverter at 128th Ave NE and NE 100th St, installed in October 2021. This median diverter prevents vehicles from traveling north-south on 128th Ave NE across NE 100th St but allows right turn in and right turn out access from 128th Ave NE. Bicycles and pedestrians are able to continue north-south on 128th Ave NE across this diverter. In May 2022 the City hired a consultant to measure vehicle speeds and volumes to analyze the effect of the diverter on traffic patterns. Additionally, in September 2022 the City conducted pedestrian and bicycle video counts at this intersection to measure use of the greenway. Measurements were compared to pre-construction volume counts to quantify the effect of the diverter. **In summary, the Greenway is meeting the guidelines performance measures of low vehicle speeds, low vehicle volumes, and increased bicycle and pedestrian use.** These counts are summarized in the tables below.

**Table 1: 128th Ave NE Bicycle and Pedestrian Volumes**

<b>Average Daily Volumes</b>	<b>2019<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>2022<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Change</b>
Bicycles (Weekday <sup>1</sup> )	19	24	+5 / 26%
Pedestrians (Weekday)	135	158	+23 / 17%
Bicycles (Weekend <sup>2</sup> )	12	18	+6 / 50%
Pedestrians (Weekend)	40	51	+11 / 28%

1. Weekday count conducted Wednesday and Thursday 6:30-9:30am and 3-6pm
2. Weekend count conducted Saturday 12-3
3. 2019 count September 18-19 and 21
4. 2022 count September 14-15 and 17

**Table 2: NE 100th St Vehicle Volumes (Average Midweek)**

Street Name	Direction	2016 <sup>1</sup>	2019 <sup>2</sup>	2022 <sup>3</sup>
NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St West of 128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE	EB	1,354	1,380	1,113
	WB	1,985	2,372	1,411
NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St East of 128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE	EB	1,152	1,169	968
	WB	1,776	2,035	1,119

1. 2016 count May 17-19
2. 2019 count September 24-25
3. 2022 count May 17-19

**Table 3: 128th Ave NE Vehicle Volumes (Average Midweek)**

Street Name	Direction	2017 <sup>1</sup>	2022 <sup>2</sup>
128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE South of NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St	NB	596	246
	SB	578	207

1. 2017 count May 23-25
2. 2022 count May 17-19

**Table 4: NE 100th St Vehicle Speeds (May 2022)**

Street Name	Direction	Posted	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St West of 128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE	EB	25mph	31mph
	WB	25mph	33mph
NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St East of 128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE	EB	25mph	31mph
	WB	25mph	29mph

**Table 5: 128<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Vehicle Speeds (May 2022)**

Street Name	Direction	Posted	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
128 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE South of NE 100 <sup>th</sup> St	NB	20mph	22mph
	SB	20mph	22mph

## **STORES TO SHORES GREENWAY PROJECT**

### **Initial Route Selection**

Following implementation of the 128th Ave NE and NE 75th St greenways, the next greenway prioritized in the Kirkland Neighborhood Greenways Guide for Implementation is the “100th St & Waverly Beach Greenway”, with conceptual routing on Slater Ave NE, NE 100th St, 18th Ave, 6th St W and Waverly Way. See highlighted route in Attachment A. Given the end points of this greenway are at the boundaries of the two designated Urban Centers of the City, Totem Lake and Downtown, in 2020 the City decided to pursue competitive grant funding for implementation.

In review of the conceptual route to prepare for the grant application, NE 100th St as an east-west route has a significant topography barrier of a very long wooden staircase from 111th Ave NE down to the Cross Kirkland Corridor, and series of other wooden staircases from the Cross Kirkland Corridor up to 18th Ave along the south end of Crestwoods Park. Given these staircases would not be accessible to people bicycling and rolling, the route was adjusted to the nearest through street connections in the Highlands via 112th Ave NE, NE 97th St, and 12th Ave, which is also a school walk route to Peter Kirk Elementary. To complete the route from Peter Kirk Elementary to the Market Neighborhood, outreach was conducted with the Norkirk Neighborhood Association to determine a route through the Norkirk neighborhood via a survey. The route selected was 9th Ave given it has an existing crosswalk across Market St to reach the Market neighborhood.

This route was branded as the “Stores to Shores Greenway” to emphasize the connection between the two urban centers of the “stores” of Totem Lake and the “shores” of Downtown Kirkland; and was awarded \$1,608,900 in FHWA funding for construction. See Attachment B for the grant awarded route.

### **Route Development and Community Engagement**

In 2023 a consultant was hired to advance design of the Stores to Shores Greenway. Following staff review in initial scoping, the route was adjusted to maintain the existing crossing of Market at 9th Ave, but then jog the route up to 10th Ave through the Norkirk neighborhood given it had existing traffic circles for traffic calming, continuous sidewalks, and was otherwise comparable as a local street to 9th Ave in terms of vehicle volumes and speeds and would reduce project scope.

Once the design reached a 30% concept level, neighborhood outreach was conducted from September – November to inform design treatments along the route. Initial community reaction was very strong against the selected route. Thus, engagement was adjusted to incorporate route comments as well as design treatment comments. Meetings were held with the North Rose Hill, Highlands, Norkirk, and Market Neighborhood Associations, the Kirkland Neighborhood Greenways advocacy group, and an online public CIP Forum was held. Additionally, mailers were sent to every parcel within 500 feet of the route to notify residents of the project and encourage attendance at the neighborhood association meetings or submit comments via the project website.

From the engagement process, two further route adjustments were made. First, through the Highlands neighborhood there were concerns regarding NE 97th St as a very steep street would not be practical for people bicycling and is closed in snow or ice conditions due to the grade. Several alternates were explored for the NE 97th hill through the Highlands. NE 112th St was selected as a more gradual incline, and another identified greenway route in the Active

Transportation Plan. Second, in the Norkirk neighborhood there were concerns that 6th St has high vehicle volumes and speeds that would not be appropriate for a greenway. The Norkirk neighborhood suggested using 4th Ave and 13th St as an alternate east-west route which results in a shorter distance traveled on 6th St, and connects to Van Aalst Park. These route changes and the original grant funded route are shown in Attachment C.

**NEXT STEPS:**

Staff will provide a project update to City Council on the Stores to Shores Greenway at the January 16 Study Session. Following direction from Council, Staff will coordinate with the granting agency PSRC to notify them of the route changes.

Updates to the Kirkland Neighborhood Greenways Guide for Implementation will be initiated in 2024 to incorporate lessons learned from implementation of the first three greenway projects and will be a future Transportation Commission work plan item.

**Attachments:**

1. Attachment A: 2017 Network Map of Greenway Projects
2. Attachment B: 2020 'Stores to Shores' Neighborhood Greenway Grant Map
3. Attachment C: 2023 Stores to Shores Greenway Route Map and Revision